# The Commonweal

*October 19, 1951*


## THE RIGHT TO EMIGRATE

*G. W. C. Ross*

## Marcel Legaut, Professor Turned Peasant

*Robert Barrat*


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The Commonweal

## WEEK BY WEEK

### *The Mossadegh Mission*

IT has not been disclosed whether Premier Mossadegh is familiar with the tales of Joseph Conrad, but there are certain facets of the aged statesman's flight to New York which are reminiscent of *Lord Jim*. Premier Mossadegh appeared at Idlewild Airport in a black great-coat; he was carrying a cane and was supported by two members of his party. With him were his son, who serves as his personal physician, and his married daughter, who is a trained nurse. A big limousine immediately took him to his suite at New York Hospital. Press reports described the 72-year-old Iranian leader as feeble and infirm; only one reporter was brash enough to find him "looking healthier than most observers had been led to expect."

The official news from his hospital suite was that the Premier's health was good, although he was weak and tired from the long flight from Teheran. The interesting question here is not the exact state of Dr. Mossadegh's health but the use that he will make of the universal concern over his condition.

At Teheran in the earlier days of the oil dispute the Iranian Premier refused to leave the protecting walls of his offices until nationalization had been accomplished—his predecessor had recently been assassinated. Before his nation's parliament he had spells of weeping and fainting. All these indications of physical and emotional weakness had a telling effect.

In coming to defend a *fait accompli* before the UN Security Council, Dr. Mossadegh is expected to make the most of his abilities along this line. There is something rather symbolic about an aged and infirm old man representing a weak and impoverished nation with his adversaries cast as imperialists, synonymous with power. In his first American press statement he even sought to shift all the blame for the misery of the masses in Iran from the corrupt and callous Iranian ruling class to past exploitations of the British oil company. (Mr. Mossadegh has a reputation for uprightness but he is himself one of the largest landowners.)

The Iranian Premier has all along stated that the dispute with the oil company is an internal matter and thus outside the jurisdiction of the United Nations. The British for their part have come round to the idea of accepting nationalization but they insist on distinguishing this from expropriation—the term they use to characterize their forcible expulsion from the great refinery of Abadan. Moreover, although they no longer insist on it in negotiations, they consider Iran's termination of the 1933 oil agreement an unwarranted unilateral act.

But in view of the fact that Iran is now in full possession and her people are now roused to the point that they will never relinquish it, the importance of the Premier's UN presentation is less for its influence on Council action than for its effect on world opinion. The big decisions that remain to be made lie in the strictly practical order.

HERE again the British and the Iranians differ sharply. The former hold that with the technicians that can be secured, Abadan will be able to operate at no better than one-fifth of capacity. The difficulty of obtaining enough tankers to transport the oil is insuperable in British eyes, while Britain is exerting economic pressure on all potential customers to make sure the Iranians have no market for their oil. On the contrary Iran asserts that four or five foreign technicians have applied for every available post and that plenty of tankers are available.

All this indicates that the possibilities of negotiation have not been exhausted; both parties are still in an argumentative mood. Is it too much to hope that such is the ultimate objective of Premier Mossadegh's personally arduous UN mission?



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## *Press Relations*

DAY in day out President Truman gives the impression of being able to take his vast responsibilities in stride. In his press interviews and his various appearances on the newsreels he seems full of fight but basically imperturbable. Months have elapsed since his last manifestations of irritability disclosed the toll exacted by the burdens of office and the strain of making one momentous decision after another in a period of semi-war.

His press conference of October 4 now gives further evidence of the strains of office. It began with a persuasive explanation of the need for uniform secrecy classifications for all government departments (a justification of the executive order which aroused such widespread apprehensions about freedom of the press). But mood and everything changed when one of the reporters present asked for an example. The President suddenly launched into a violent attack against newspapers and magazines which were giving away national defense secrets.

*Fortune* magazine, it seems, had published maps of all our atom plants, while others had told in detail about our new weapons or published maps of our cities. In the course of a stormy session it developed that the release of all this information had been approved by the military authorities. This led the President to criticize the press for not exercising its own censorship —a contention later explained away by Joseph Short, presidential press secretary.

The conclusion was inescapable that the President had obtained a wrong impression from some of the mass of data that comes across his desk; he had not realized that the information divulged had been authorized by the military. No doubt he was also influenced by the findings Yale University has just produced for the Division of External Research of the Government, according to which 95 percent of our military secrets are divulged for all to see. The conjunction of the President's security order with unsavory revelations of corruption in office was fortuitous; Mr. Truman's aversion to censorship is genuine. He stoutly adheres to freedom of the press.

The military must realize what they are doing when they release such data. Their basic assumption is no doubt that the Russians can uncover such information anyway. But a layman might wonder if this is not going out of our way to make things easier for enemy operatives. They are limited in numbers. They have just so much time and energy at their disposal. Why increase their capacity for sabotage by doing this part of their work for them? In other words there was something very normal about the President's reaction. But in this security area the responsibility appears to lie more heavily with the Defense Department than with the belabored press.

## *The "New Era"*

AFTER watching the development of Russian foreign policy over a period of the last six years, most of us would be inclined to agree with the statement made recently by the Australian Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Spender, who said that "it is certain that anything that Soviet Russia does in any part of the world is done as part of global strategy."

This is a conclusion that can be well established if, on looking back upon the major foreign policy moves made by the Russians during this period, one observes how it is that they fit, by calculation and convenience, into a grand design.

Beginning with the attempt to seize northern Iran, Russia made her early moves on her Western frontiers: in the Balkans, in Czechoslovakia, in Greece, and, most spectacularly, in Berlin, with her attempt to blockade the city and drive the Western powers out of East Germany. If we recall how things were at the time of the Berlin blockade, we will remember that, so far as we were concerned, for several weeks all eyes were on Berlin.

But soon all eyes were on China. For while the Russians were successfully diverting our attention and almost all of our available military power to the West, the Chinese Communists were steadily closing in on Chiang's Nationalists until

## • NEXT WEEK •

NEVILLE BRAYBROOKE reviews Christopher Fry's play, *A Sleep of Prisoners.*

"The intention is through the wonder of words to reveal the wonder of the Word. Wake up in bed; reach for the lamp; turn on the light. Then look at your hand: for a moment view it objectively—as one can at such moments. In it you will see the wonder of the Word incarnate, a work of art far greater than *Hamlet.* In *A Sleep of Prisoners* Fry attempts another variation on this theme."



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all of China was swiftly and surprisingly delivered to the Russian-Chinese coalition. And after this came Korea and the sudden diversion of most of our available power to the East.

It will be noticed that in three instances—in Iran, in Greece and in Berlin—the Russians went only so far and no farther. In each case they retreated not because they lacked preponderant power in any one of the localities—they could easily have had their way in each place—but rather because they lacked the preponderant global power to wage all-out industrial and atomic war against the West. It has been concluded from this that the real intention of Russian foreign policy is to keep pressing for Russian domination in all areas right up to the point of all-out war—a war that would be too great a risk as long as Russia lags in the atomic armaments race.

This theory as to Russia's intentions got a stiff test during the first year of the Korean war when, as the days went by with no indication that the Russians were ready to retreat, it began to look as if they were getting ready to take the big risk. It was our fear of such a move that led us to rearm in a hurry, to build up the strength of the Atlantic Treaty powers and to prepare the way for Japanese rearmament. At this point, with the prospect of the encirclement of the Soviet Union growing more real, Jacob Malik made his truce-talk proposal and it appeared that once again Russia was repeating the pattern of withdrawal.

For four months now the talk of truce has filled the air while the Communists have been deliberately stalling around, playing a game pretty much of their own choice. It is quite obvious that Russia, for the time being, wants it both ways: she hopes that while our power is tied down on the remote Korean peninsula, inflation will keep eating away at the dollar, and at the same time she is holding the door of negotiation open far enough to allow a fast exit from Korea in case the risk of all-out war becomes too great. The truce talks are being used by both sides to probe the global intentions of the other. Almost childish issues have been chosen by one to test the other, the purpose being not only to find out the enemy's local intentions, but to see how far he will go in his over-all pattern of attack and withdrawal, a pattern both sides have been using. So far, we have found out that the Russians are definitely wary of going the whole way, and knowledge of this sort is indispensable to our strategists in waging the power fight around the world with the Soviet Union; it is significant that Charles Bohlen, the State Department's expert on Russia, accompanied General Bradley on his last trip to Korea.

In the meantime, while this sparring goes on, men die every day and all concerned must know that this situation cannot go on indefinitely. Evidently it has fallen to Mr. Gordon Dean, the chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, to warn the Russians that we cannot allow this situation to go on indefinitely. In what appears to have been a carefully planted speech, he has revealed that the United States now has tactical atomic weapons for use on the battlefield to "cancel out" the enemy's manpower advantage and he has suggested that we give "serious consideration" to their use. Our possession of these weapons, said Mr. Dean, "provides a real hope for peace . . . in so far as those who might be contemplating aggression understand the full import of what I am trying to say." Undoubtedly it was intended that the Russians should understand the full import of his remarks and hasten the Korean truce talks to a conclusion.

And so, for the first time since the bomb was dropped on Japan, the atomic power factor has been injected almost directly into the world struggle between the Soviet Union and the West. It is a development of the utmost seriousness.

When he heard of Mr. Dean's remarks about our new weapons, Senator Edwin C. Johnson of Colorado said, "If we have them, what are we waiting for? There are plenty of likely targets over there in Korea." No doubt there are. But we would appeal for a more "serious consideration" of the matter than this.

It is most likely, judging from her past policy, that Russia can be forced to bring her Korean venture to a close without our resorting to these weapons, if we are careful not to put the Communists in a position of having no way out except world war. If not, if the Russians are unwilling to stop the bloodshed in Korea, then it may be necessary for us to use the weapons Mr. Dean speaks of.

If we must do this, it will be a misfortune for all mankind, no matter what the immediate results may be in Korea. For Russia has served explosive notice that she is in the atomic arms race for all she is worth. The decision to use these weapons will be a most fateful one.

Mr. Dean's speech is a sign of things to come: there will be more speeches like this one and more of these threats. We trust that they will be heard in this country above the voices of those who prefer to argue about the past, and we hope that they will be heard with calmness.



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# *Lost Sheep*

I WAS in Chicago last week and called on a family in Cicero. They live a few blocks from the scene of the infamous riot which made the name of their suburb known all over the world. "I read your pieces," said the mother of the family, who has known me since I was a child, "and I like them sometimes, but I don't always agree. Especially when you write about the Negro question, I definitely don't agree."

This, I suppose, was a family more or less typical in Cicero. Law-abiding home-owners, second or third generation on American soil, they are proud of what they have accomplished in the past thirty years. They are people who have worked hard for what they have, and they have come along economically, socially and culturally through the years. The children have several years more formal education than their parents, and it looks as if the grandchildren will have even greater opportunities.

This family, like many of their neighbors, have ever remained close to the Church in their rise through the city neighborhoods to the decency of Cicero. They sent their children to Catholic schools and supported every Catholic cause generously. They and their kind built the great city parishes, the churches, schools, convents, comfortable rectories; their children have supplied the priesthood and religious orders with fresh recruits; their money has been poured out freely for the foreign missions and special diocesan collections. They have always been looked upon, and probably look upon themselves, as devout, practical Catholics and solid American citizens.

Now something like the Cicero affair takes place in their community and they find themselves branded in the press, over the radio and at international conclaves—and by writers like me in magazines like this—as neither good democrats nor good Christians, at least on this one point. But the way they see it, everything they have been taught to value, as Catholics and Americans, would be threatened by allowing Negroes to live among them—their neat community would become a slum, the churches and schools they built would become empty, the neighborhood priests, if any were left, would be missionaries from some motherhouse that sends off religious to the Far East. That is the way it turned out in other Chicago neighborhoods, they will tell you.

A few priests are strong enough to brave popular disapproval by thundering against this attitude and quote the Popes and snatches of moral theology to back up their position. When they do these people think something wild and radical is happening in the Church. When their own pastors are silent, or when they speak of the "rights of white people," meaning their right to preserve the neighborhood they have worked hard to create and maintain, as opposed to "all this yammering about Negro rights," the words of priests make supreme sense to them. If they have to choose between priests, they'll take the ones in their parishes who know them, and let the few articulate moralizers go. They know that the priests who were silent during the riot look upon the thundering few as idealistic busy-bodies at best, somewhat on on the screwball side. And they are inclined to agree.

Perhaps my Cicero friends were not wholly typical. They have no special fear or hatred of Negroes. They took no part in the riots. I know they disapproved heartily of the violence and sincerely wished the whole thing could have been avoided. But still they were unwilling to buck the prevailing opinion in their neighborhood, or what they thought was the prevailing opinion. They did fear for their reputation and local standing as much as for their property. They were not willing to stand up and be counted.

Try to look at it as they do. They have seen, in the city, the rapid decline of neighborhoods. Property is sold to Negroes and that is enough to throw terror into the white community. Real estate leeches appear and buy up homes for far less than their value. Then they remodel them, overcrowd them with Negro families who are ever pressed for space, and charge exorbitant rents. Negroes flood the area. Under these conditions a new slum is created, almost visibly, the process is so swift. It has happened time and again and is still happening.

Segregation is not the answer, even at the practical level, leaving aside the spiritual evil of it. It is partially the segregation mentality itself which produces the Negro slums. The only solution is a gradual integration. A neighborhood where Negro families were calmly integrated into the social fabric would have no need for economic fears.

That means white people wouldn't rush out when Negroes moved in. And that means leadership, in a town like Cicero leadership of a kind admirably suited to the Catholic parishes. Staying put must be a *community* decision. I know one woman on the South Side of Chicago who refused to move out when Negroes moved in. Hers was a brave decision but futile. She is now a sole white living in a ghetto.

The leadership necessary was not present in Cicero. The price for that lack was violence and the international disgrace that came to the town. A few local Catholics spoke out and their statement was widely publicized, but they might have been speaking from Calcutta so cut off were they from their own community. The natural leaders were silent.

But until these leaders find their voices, until they succeed in convincing people to stay where they are and accept the Negro family as a neighbor, until they rid themselves and their community of the nonsense that their town is stigmatized by the presence of colored families, people are going to be terrorized at the thought of losing all they have spent a lifetime building. And their fears will drive them to violence or silent connivance.

It is the same with racism as with other moral problems. It is not enough to enunciate principles and castigate sinners. It is necessary to provide practical, realistic leadership. It is necessary to create a climate wherein to practice virtue does not call for heroic effort. It is necessary not only to shut doors but to open them. There come times when the shepherds must not only watch over but lead the sheep.

JOHN COGLEY.



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# *The Right To Emigrate*

## "The world's population problem is a world problem" — some suggested beginnings.

By G. W. C. ROSS

NOT long ago THE COMMONWEAL published an editorial dealing with the matter of overpopulation in Italy and suggesting that "emigration is the real solution."

Overpopulation is a relative term. Even though the world as a whole is not and will not become overcrowded certain regions may. It is certainly a mathematical possibility that the world's population might come to press on the means of bare subsistence.

Catholics, however, seem to be barred from believing that the earth cannot now furnish, or will ever be unable to furnish, everybody at least a decent living. For Catholics accept the permanent validity of the Scriptural injunction to "multiply and replenish the earth;" and it seems not permissible to suppose that God has commanded us to pursue a course of conduct which, the Malthusians say, can produce only widening and deepening misery and disaster.

A long time ago I read a book by an English author of Malthusian persuasion who conceded that all the symptoms of overpopulation will appear even in a rich community of ample agricultural resources if its land is owned and used so as to deny to most of its inhabitants adequate and reasonable access to it. The striking thing was that he took it blandly for granted that the ensuing poverty and suffering could be alleviated only by emigration or by birth control. That they might be dealt with by curbing the landowners' absolute power was a subversive notion that apparently never entered his head.

Ever since I read that book I have nursed a suspicion that overpopulation serves as an all too facile explanation for a social *malaise* that comes really from bad laws and misgovernment.

Still, the possibility, even the actuality of genuine local overpopulation can scarcely be questioned. It may be, as THE COMMONWEAL said, that Italy is really overpopulated. If so, then certainly the growing impoverishment of the Italian people can be avoided only by birth control or by emigration; and since birth control must be condemned, only emigration remains.

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THE COMMONWEAL dropped the subject right there. But if the Italians must not use contraceptives, and otherwise can avoid increasing misery only by emigrating, then they must have a moral right to emigrate, according to the Natural Law. But if it is their natural right to emigrate from Italy, it must be no less their natural right to immigrate into other countries where the same difficulties do not press. One cannot go away from one place without going to some other place. If Italy is overpopulated and the United States is not, the Italians must have a natural right to enter and settle in this country in such numbers as, without producing overpopulation here, may relieve Italy's congestion. The United States Constitution secured their right to do that. And in broader terms the United States once affirmed by formal act of Congress that "the right of expatriation is a natural and inherent right of all people," and that any order or decision of any officer or agency of the United States which "denies, restricts, impairs or questions the right of expatriation is declared inconsistent with the fundamental principles of the Republic."

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IN GENERAL, throughout the middle and latter part of the nineteenth century, emigration from Western Europe and European immigration into this country were mostly free from political restriction. That fact had much to do with postponing to our century the social tensions of Europe, and it was advantageous also to this country. Nor can it be urged that the United States is overpopulated yet: its average density of fifty persons per square mile is not far from the world average, and this country is one of the earth's richest regions naturally, as well as one of the most advanced and widely exploited technologically. If this country is within sight of possible overpopulation, certainly much of the rest of the world must be seriously overcrowded.

But everyone who has done any international traveling since World War I knows that neither emigration nor immigration is free any more. Quite the contrary. Less than fifteen years after the act of Congress I have quoted (passed in 1868), we contradicted it flatly—and incidentally violated a treaty—by beginning to exclude the



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Chinese; and almost at the same time we passed a "contract labor" act to exclude any laborer who came here to work at a job he had already arranged for.

Ironically, the original act of 1868 still stands without formal repeal in the codified United States Statutes, though it is notorious that we now allow only a small and arbitrary "quota" of people from any country outside the Western Hemisphere to enter this country in any one year. And every Government in the world today will insist that any right to come into or depart from its territory is a matter of purely "domestic" concern, which it has the sole and exclusive right to grant or to withhold; although patently it is nothing of the kind, since it touches on the most crucial international rights and interests.

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IF international migration needs political control, that can rest properly only in the hands of an international authority. But the United Nations can do nothing. The very first Chapter of the Charter has a section stipulating that "nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter." The section adds that "this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII." But that last qualification does not relate to making the decisions that are to be enforceable; the United Nations can decide nothing that is "essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state." And regardless of the Natural Law there is no question that the "positive" international law does remit migration to the unhampered control of each nation. It is safe to say that the World Court today would not think of holding that any nation is subject to any general international obligation about it.

It is true that UNESCO inserted into its Universal Declaration of Human Rights the statements that "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country," and that "No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality." While this "proclaims" everybody's right to leave any country, it declares his right only to "return" to *"his"* own country; not his right to go into—much less stay in—any other country.

But anyway, the provisions of this Universal Declaration were not even intended to be legally enforceable rules. A later international commission has drafted a Proposed Human Rights Covenant, which it does ask the member countries to bind themselves to carry out; but the Covenant is as cagey as the Declaration: It says that "Everyone shall be free to leave any country, including his own," and "free to enter the country of which he is a national" (citizen), and that "no alien" (who has been) "legally admitted to the territory of a state shall be expelled therefrom except on established legal grounds and according to procedure and safeguards which shall in all cases be provided by law." The Covenant has not yet been ratified so as to bind any country; but even if it were universally adopted, just how much assurance of relief would it give to the people of Italy or of any congested country?

Finally, the IRO has just formulated a convention designed to benefit that most unfortunate and most abused class of all the dwellers on the earth, the Displaced Persons. By that draft convention the IRO asks each Government to bind itself to treat all the displaced persons whom it may allow to enter and live in its country as well as it treats any other aliens whose residence it will tolerate; but it does not venture to ask any country to agree to admit any displaced persons at all. And I do not see that the United Nations, within the terms of its charter, can go any further. If the United States were to draw around itself an iron curtain tighter than Russia or any other country has ever done and absolutely forbid entry or departure by anybody for however short a time and for whatever purposes, the United Nations is not competent to declare that such measures amount to "aggression"; though in sober truth they would be exactly that against the people of any and every overpopulated country.

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SO what is to be done? I will not deny my personal conviction that our 1868 statute pronounces the sound principle of the Natural Law: not until the international movement of peoples is made about as free as interstate movement is within this country can we have an assurance of stable, durable international peace. But that is too extreme a view for current consumption. And it does not follow that the United States right off ought just to repeal all its legal restrictions on immigration and emigration. That becomes a question of prudence. That the Natural Law enunciates a universal right of free migration does not carry with it a necessary corollary that all legal barriers to international migration ought forthwith simply to be leveled—not even by an international authority, if an effective international Government existed; much less, by the United States alone, regardless of what any other country may or may not do. No United States Government could do that anyhow. In their present temper only a powerful totalitarian Government could make the American people submit to free ingress.



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Where, then, can we go from here? For the moment, I can see only step by step; but Catholics certainly must try to see to it that our own country steps in the right direction.

Under our present laws, if a particular foreign country can send 100,000 persons a year here but only 75,000 actually come, the difference of 25,000 is not carried over and added to that country's quota for the next year; on the contrary, only 100,000 are permitted to enter the next year—even if none at all came the year before. It has been proposed in Congress that the law be amended to provide for such a carry-over of the annual quota numbers. Why not? World War II did lead us to repeal our Chinese exclusion law and bring Chinese immigration within the quota formula. Why now should we not extend the principle to the Japanese? Long ago the Jay Treaty granted to Yankees and Canadians alike wide freedom of travel and residence, each in the other's country. Why should an American who goes to live in Canada, or a Canadian who resides in this country, need to be naturalized? An Irishman in England is not regarded as an alien there—though the Irish Republic does not reciprocate. But why indeed might not the English-speaking countries among themselves establish both free migration and an inter-citizenship for the United States, Great Britain, Eire, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, corresponding to our interstate citizenship in this country? In 1940 Mr. Churchill offered to sponsor such an inter-citizenship for Englishmen and Frenchmen. Nothing came of that, but the suggestion ought not to die. If Western Europe must stand as a firm bastion of Christendom against the contemporary infidel, certainly free migration and an inter-citizenship among the Western European nations would help mightily to cement it; and the Council of Europe and the Benelux arrangements offer what could be made promising channels of approach to such a plan.

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NOT that any such makeshift, nor all of them together, could furnish a true, final arrangement for solving the world's population problem, for it is a world problem. But the only way to begin is to begin; and unless and until we can persuade ourselves to swallow one or more of these homeopathic doses, certainly it is sheer fantasy to think of trying to put universal free migration into effect. On the other hand, if we can bring ourselves to take some such half-steps, halting and inadequate though they are, and find our fears belied and our prejudices allayed, then it may be that the idea of going further, even to the end of the road, will rise some day on the horizon of practical politics.

FROM FRANCE

# *Legaut, Professor Turned Peasant*

THE leading French daily, *Le Monde*, recently published, under the title "Off the Beaten Path," a series of articles by a former university professor who has become a peasant in the Département of la Drôme.

There is nothing extraordinary in this simple story of a man's career. There have been many, especially during the last ten years, who have done as he has done and gone back to a life on the land. A whole anti-machine and anti-urban literature has fostered among young Frenchmen a misty nostalgia for a life in contact with the elements, a life that is more "authentic" than that of the pale and overworked city-dweller. One thinks of Pourrat, Ramuz, Giono. From 1940 on, the Occupation and the need for food tended to help this trend along. There was no shortage of fields lying fallow or of picturesque villages that had been abandoned.

Communities of young artists, of bourgeois, began to spring up in certain of these villages. The Vichy regime encouraged work in the forests and the fields with its *Compagnons de France* and its Youth Projects. But when a number of these projects failed, people lost confidence in the idea. The inexperience of these cavalier peasants, their lack of techniques, the unresponsive quality of the deserted soils once tilled by the peasants, brought it home to more than a few that a life close to nature is not all poetry.

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FOR Marcel Légaut the idea was from the beginning something quite different. His was not a romantic return to the soil but the fulfillment of the spiritual vocation of a solitary.

His strange story is worth telling. The son of a modest family, he was accepted in 1919 in the science section of the Ecole Normale Supérieure. He specialized there in mathematics but more than anything else he became the leader of a Catholic group which was very small but extremely alive—one which had for its prime object intellectual research and the interior life.

The spiritual adviser of this group was Abbé Portal, an admirable sort of priest greatly preoccupied with the ecumenical movement and a friend of Lord Halifax. Under his influence the group went back to the sources; instead of simply practicing the outward observances of religion to the letter, it began to read the Old and New Testaments with pen in hand and courageously to confront the problems which scientific disciplines posed for the mind of a modern believer. Little by little the group expanded; it included members of the teaching profes-



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sion, who came to join and take part in the "Meditations" of various group leaders.

Certain ones of them desired the most profound religious commitment, and they became Dominicans; that was the case with Father Avril, for example, the present superior of the Dominican Province of Paris. For Légaut and a few of his companions, it was not a question of leaving the world and of separating themselves from it in a new garb and with a new outlook. The religious adventure which they sought was one which they could pursue more in contact with their own time.

Having been named to a teaching post at the Ecole Normale, Légaut hired several rooms above a stable and moved in with three companions. Their life there was harsher than that of a monastery; they observed strict fast and abstinence, recited the Divine Office and worked the farm. The group spread out more and more. Every week there was a bigger crowd in the little room where Légaut spoke on some text from the Bible or dealt with the commitment of the Christian.

These meetings in the Rue Galilée were to be the start of a parish university, an attempt to bring Christian teachers together on a specifically religious basis.

After he was named provincial professor and soon afterward a member of the faculty, Legaut had to take long train journeys every week so as not to lose contact with the group. He was asked to collect the texts of his talks and bring them out in one volume. This was entitled *The Prayers of a Believer,* one of the books most widely read by the young postwar Christian generation. This book embodies a clear intuition of the demands the Bible makes on the life of everyone. It reflects meditation of the most interior sort, the reactions of a mind which at one and the same time is lucid, serene and wholly intent on the practice of the Beatitudes.

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DURING the long vacations, there was a more extensive attempt to lead a communitarian life. Two or three hundred people came together in an old chateau high in the mountains. They followed a monastic order of the day, they read, they worked, they meditated on some theme of Légaut's. "Wonderful retreats," people who took part in 1935 or 1936 told me, "in an atmosphere of the primitive Christian community; they would revivify us spiritually for the whole ensuing year."

But the human and spiritual adventure of Légaut was far from finished. The short war of 1940 intervened and then the harsh defeat for our country, which set his reflections off in a new direction and meant for him new changes in life. As a non-commissioned officer he came to realize that his contacts with the group from the university had not at all prepared him to be a leader, that all his learning left him defenseless before his men. He also reflected, with many of his compatriots, on the moral and spiritual causes of the French disaster. Without trying to make the French peasantry the model of all virtues, he came to the conclusion that it is in the peasant milieu that the age-old qualities of the French race are best preserved: humility, frugality, a willingness to brave dangers, genuine prudence, physical and moral strength, common sense.

He conceived the idea of doing what the Benedictines had once done. He left for a remote mountainside with some students to cultivate a few acres of French soil, to make whole men of his young followers, aiding them through a life which was harsh, one that was meant to develop them on every plane: physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual. He found a little abandoned domain in la Drôme, married, and settled there. Vichy accepted his resignation from the university. However he was not able to find students to follow him, or if he did find some who were attracted to his project, they left at the end of a few weeks. But he decided to continue alone. "Only M. Légaut could do what he has done," a peasant woman of the region said to me recently. "You cannot realize the compulsion he felt to work there, but, you see, he has accustomed himself to hardship."

The life was indeed very harsh. Les Granges de Lesches, a hamlet of four small abandoned farms, is situated only about four miles from Luc-en-Diois, but it takes a full two hours walk along steep and rocky paths to get there. The countryside is wild and severe; it is the one which Giono describes in most of his novels. There are rocky hilltops with pine and beech forests and a few pieces of land at the bottom of the valleys suitable for cultivation. In winter the paths remain impassable for several weeks at a time. The first year Légaut had to haul his materials, his food, his seed and everything he needed for living among these stones in a small cart drawn by a mule. To get to some fields situated on a plateau he had to carry the cart on his own back in certain places.

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TODAY the difficult period is over; the area is back in shape, the experiment has succeeded financially, thanks to the rotation of crops and careful methods of cultivation, as well as to the development of a fine and profitable flock of sheep. Since Légaut did not want to give way to archaic and anti-machine prejudices the way some of his contemporaries have done, he bought a jeep, a mechanical cultivator and a power mower. And he plans to mechanize even further in order to show the mountaineers of the region how the machine can relieve them of their burdens.

But in order to reach the point at which they are today, it took superhuman courage on the part of Légaut and his wife. To keep on for one, two, ten years rebuilding this soil foot by foot without ever yielding to the temptation to discouragement or to give up and return to the city to a former profession which is so much easier, required genuine faith; his vocation there had to be a true one.

This is, in fact, the call to solitude to which Légaut, along with so many others in France, has responded. Some of them have buried themselves with the Trappists, the Carmelites, the Carthusians, in order to find God in prayer and contemplation. He has sought to live as the lowliest peasant in the mountain regions, to earn his



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bread by the sweat of his brow, to bury himself in the thickest folds of the human dough. "If the grain does not die, it will not bear fruit."

And truly when one beholds the magnificent head of this man of fifty years, handsome as that of one of the Apostles that adorn the portals of our cathedrals, he realizes that Marcel Légaut has indeed found in the silence of his mountain a terrain for the flowering of his personality. A sort of joyous and spiritual peace radiates from all his being.

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I HAVE just had the opportunity to confirm this for myself over a period of three weeks. Every year from the middle of July to the middle of September a group of sympathizers go to the Granges. For although he has fled the world, Légaut has not sought to flee his brother man. As soon as the walls of his house were repaired he went about putting up buildings to accomodate members of the teaching profession who might wish to go there for their vacations. For several weeks families of teachers, individual Religious, college and secondary school teachers, government officials, and former friends from the time of the Occupation live there.

Their time is divided among material tasks, visits to the chapel, solitary walks and intellectual exchanges. These contacts are extremely rewarding for one and all. But Légaut does not change his habits because of his guests; he keeps on mowing his hay, threshing his oats, pasturing his flock. Every evening and occasionally on a rainy afternoon all come together around him in the old battered chapel or in the large country kitchen with its roaring fire.

And then you see and admire him in action. He clasps together his large hands, the fingernails stained with earth, smiles, and speaks to us. Sometimes it is a page of Bernanos or of Kierkegaard or of some Christian philosopher that he reads and interprets. Again he will meditate on a spiritual subject: the Incarnation, sin, hope, science and religion. People listen in silence and then they ask a few questions.

What he says is so true, so borne out by the experience of his whole life, that you have little taste for raising objections or contradicting him. It is the fruit of a wisdom accumulated in the course of long days of solitary meditation, tried in the harsh contact of the labor of the peasant and of the actuality of the earth. Many young intellectuals have had a definitive lesson in Christian humility and in detachment from this man who could have filled the most exalted positions.

Of all Légaut's system of thought—of his religious conception of the world—the following idea is the one I should like to underline as fundamental. That is the idea that the Christian, if he seeks to pattern his life authentically after the life of Christ, must descend, must renounce. It is obvious that this is necessary on the mystical plane; the true contemplative knows that he must renounce everything, must die to self in order to find God.

But for Légaut this voluntary descent must likewise have, in a somewhat mysterious fashion, its influence on the social plane. According to him a society cannot live and endure unless within there exists a double movement —a movement from the depths to the heights, and also one from the heights to the depths. But a society such as French society, with its dreams of equality, of emancipation, born in the eighteenth century, scarcely is conscious of this second movement any longer. There are few parents who do not dream of seeing their children rise several rungs on the social ladder. This rise is, of course, to their way of thinking, to be made in the sheltered way of the white-collar worker with his paid vacations and retirement on a pension at the age of fifty. No young man with any ambition fails to consider that it is unworthy of him to continue to live in his natural milieu, if that milieu is modest or poor. In that event he is ashamed of his father's occupation and he rushes off to Paris to seek his fortune. Thus France has an enormous brain—Paris, where the life of the arts, of industry, commerce, intelligence, etc., is concentrated. And this brain is congested.

The future of French society, the future of religion in France, depends, for Légaut, on the appearance of a reverse movement of descent on the part of the better-off, the more talented, toward the lowly, toward the life of the most humble and abandoned.

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WHEREVER this movement has been started, the life of human communities can be seen to reform; a creative life springs up through the inspiration of a few leaders. It is the case in our large worker districts, in which militant Christians, some of them from the most bourgeois families and laden down with diplomas, have gone to live as poor people in the midst of the poor. Whether they be Religious or laymen, the result is the same: spontaneously, groups arise, friendship and confidence reappear among men, the humble no longer feel that they are abandoned.

Such has been the idea which has led to Légaut's "return to the land." But he knows, as all true apostles do, that man serves only to the extent that he is willing to be an ineffectual instrument. Légaut has not attempted to touch the peasant milieu itself, one that is so distrustful of all those who seek to indoctrinate it. He has confidence in the power of ideas that are true. His idea is on the way toward accomplishment little by little.

ROBERT BARRAT.

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## An Appeal

Rev. Peter Tonello of St. John Bosco's Shrine, Sherrapunji P. O., Assam, India, writes on behalf of his orphans and the priests of his mission. There is a rice famine and he needs $120 a month to feed his orphans. A recent storm caused $750 damage to one of his schools. Checks may be sent him directly, or to Father Tonello's account in the Bank of America, 660 South Spring Street, Los Angeles, California.



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# *The Tribal Approach*

IT CAN hardly be argued that when one joins the tribe or, having been away, comes back to it, that it is exceptional if the tribe rejoices. To this tribal custom Whittaker Chambers proved to be an exception. When he returned from his stay with the Communists, men hung no swinging, shining medals about his neck; they placed no laurels on his brow. The name of Mr. Chambers, even now, is by many held in no reverence. The essence of the antipathy toward him, and the source of unbelief, lay in his having been a Communist. How can we, the argument ran, believe that one who was taught to lie, who practiced deceit on principle, now says what is true and is deserving of our faith and trust? Doubt still gathers like cold breath about the edges of some conversations when his name is mentioned.

There are men who distrust and are embarrassed by Whittaker Chambers but who have accorded full faith to Mr. Louis Budenz or to Miss Elizabeth Bentley. This is not because Mr. Budenz has written that "in the midst of the peace and joy which is now ours, we can exclaim with the Psalmist: 'I will declare my iniquity, and I will be thoughtful of my sin'" (*This Is My Story,* Page VII). No man has the right to say, and few possess the audacity to say, that the one man is more religious—though one is less flamboyant—than the other.

The fact is that the tribe is a different tribe. Mr. Budenz came back into Catholicism. For many this was —and is—as if he had become blessed, and all his words were canonized into truth. I am not quarreling with this procedure, obviously absurd; I find it merely distressing. For it accounts, in some measure, for some of the allegiance to Senator McCarthy which has always seemed shameful to me.

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AMONG the most disconcerting of my public experiences have been the speeches I have been asked to make to wholly Catholic audiences who have invited me once. I am assumed to have left certain judgments out of consideration. For instance the *single* operating criterion for evaluating Franco: "You forget the sanctity of his private life." The judgment that Senator McCarthy is a Catholic, "is saving us from Communism," and always tells the truth. The judgment that converts have, by the fact of conversion or return, become benign, all malignancy or even possibility of error stripped away, and have elevated and enriched the moral character of our lives. The judgment that the freedoms of men, and that the rights inhering in their moral personality, can, somehow, be laid aside as if they were of temporary value, so that one is a tyrant in Russia, but not a tyrant in Argentina or in Spain. The judgment that the fact of truth is pragmatic or that of morality empiric; that values shift somehow to suit your purposes, or your desires. The requirement that the accused—a Wallace or a Lattimore, a Jessup or a Service—prove his absolute purity, but that McCarthy or McCarran prove nothing at all, and in no wise be amenable to evidence or to rule. These judgments constitute a substantial part of my own experiences. They leave me, even in memory, the victim of a kind of moral phlegm, and of a passing feeling of being excommunicated from the sons of men. But then I manage to recall the words of Samuel Butler, that "belief, like any other moving body, follows the path of least resistance." Yet I could wish it were not so.

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SENATOR McCARTHY acts as he always acts, careless by calculation, ignorant, arrogant, cowardly, and muscular, untrue even to himself, even by whatever peculiar standards, if any, he has set up for himself. When Senator Benton—to whom all decent Americans, touched with dignity and honor and self-respect, owe endless gratitude—charges under oath that Senator McCarthy "lied under oath to a Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee last year by denying he had said in a speech at Wheeling, West Virginia, that there are 205 Communists in the State Department known to the Secretary of State," McCarthy refers to Mr. Benton as a "mental midget." That is the whole of his denial.

McCarthy showed the Senate what was supposed to be an FBI chart which allegedly listed Communists and Soviet agents in the State Department. Senator Benton quotes J. Edgar Hoover as saying: "The FBI did not send any such chart to the State Department and of course made no evaluation of information as was indicated." Senator McCarthy refuses to be "bothered." That is the whole of his denial.

McCarthy "promised to list 81 Communists for any Senate Committee." He never kept the promise.

McCarthy promised to "stand or fall" on the Lattimore case. He did not stand. He did not admit he had fallen. Of him Senator Benton can carefully use such language as this: he "has borne false witness and deliberately and repeatedly corrupted and subverted facts."

McCarthy continues to press a case against Mr. Philip C. Jessup even though Mr. Jessup has, again, been cleared by the Loyalty Review Board. In this, as always, we find McCarthy contradicted by honorable men. The Chairman of the Loyalty Board is a Republican, once a Senator from Connecticut. His name is Hiram Bingham. It is the claim of McCarthy that Mr. Bingham once said to him that he would not have cleared Mr. Jessup as a "security risk." To this Mr. Bingham replies: "I have never told him any such thing."

Senator McCarthy claims that Philip Jessup once sponsored a Soviet-American friendship dinner of the American-Russian Institute. McCarthy did not even know if Mr. Jessup was at the dinner. He did not know if Mr. Jessup belonged to the Institute. He simply was without information. On these points he who is trying to hang Mr. Jessup in the elastic noose of "a great affinity for Communist causes," said to Senator Fulbright, "I do not know. . . . This is just part of the history, a



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small part of it, understand. If this were the only evidence, I certainly would not be here." But the rest of his evidence was as little, as feeble as that. It was as much as he had ever offered before. Nor was he put off by Senator Fulbright's characterization that he had "never seen a more arrogant nor a more rude witness."

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MANY men are rejoicing that McCarthy is being, at last, stood up to, that he is being attacked, that responsible men have begun to fight back. Naturally, I share in that rejoicing. For I believe that that alone should be charged which can be proved, that men should not be assailed by the robbers of good names—"he who filches from me my good name robs me of that which not enriches him, but makes me poor indeed."

But the McCarthy who can dare to say that he has exposed Drew Pearson "as a mouthpiece of the Communist Party," is not yet really on the run. The malignant thing called McCarthyism spreads itself still like a miasmic cloud sailing across the honor of our sky.

Of it the McCarran Committee is a malevolent and delinquent child, heedless of hurt, and without the sense of fairness or objectivity, even conscious purpose, which would distinguish a parcel of greedy ingrates waiting for the reading of an uncle's will. When one of its friendly witnesses spontaneously testified to his belief in and support of Mr. Jessup, its counsel, Robert Morris, with startled interjection said, "I did not ask you that."

It cunningly picks its victims, and as cunningly chooses its witnesses, and proceeds on the almost incredible assumption that a difference of opinion is first cousin to treason. Of the opinions of General MacArthur, of James F. Byrnes, of General Wedemeyer about Chiang, the Communists and the danger of war with the Soviets, we hear not a word.

Mr. Joseph Alsop, a brilliant and conscientious journalist, has, like the child in the fable, pointed out that the McCarran subcommittee has no moral clothes on. Its skeleton stands revealed, if not shivering, and its brittle bones rattle in the clean, sweet wind Mr. Alsop has had blown about it. The cables containing Mr. Wallace's recommendations on China policy he was the first to print. Republicans would not allow the Alsop column to become a part of the Congressional Record, so Senator Lehmann had to read them—word for word—into the Record. Mr. Alsop has been able to demonstrate that—what he previously had maintained—the letter and documents released by Henry Wallace "contain every essential fact needed to prove that Senator Pat McCarran's Subcommittee on Internal Security has been taking demonstrably false testimony concerning Wallace's trip to China in the spring of 1944."

Mr. Alsop has shown up the contradictions in testimony offered to the subcommittee by Mr. Louis Budenz. Mr. Alsop is very kind to Mr. Budenz speaking of the contradictions "into which the *unfortunate* Budenz was led." He says he "may well have been the *unconscious* victim of his former Communist associates, who derive incalculable advantages from the fear and suspicion now being spread through the government" (N. Y. *Herald Tribune,* Sept. 14). He even cites Whittaker Chambers as authority for a process Mr. Budenz may have been seized by: "With the play of so many influences on my mind, because people are always asking me questions, bringing me information, there are actually areas of my experience where I can no longer distinguish between what I once knew and what I have [later] heard."

But when on Saturday, October 6, he heard Mr. Budenz testify again, Joseph Alsop asked Senator McCarran if he might be allowed to testify because he "took part in certain events which prove that Budenz has lied to your Subcommittee on Internal Security." He gets less kind and speaks of Budenz's "bare-faced audacity," and says that "It is hard to know which is the more shocking—Budenz's free and easy way with the reputations of American citizens or his fantastic distortion of already recorded history."

Honesty and care require that we wait for Mr. Alsop's testimony. But I am led to wonder about some of those audiences which once invited me to speak to them. I have no doubt as to whom we owe allegiance—to the tribe, or to the truth.

FRANCIS DOWNING.

# The Stage

## REMAINS TO BE SEEN

WITH this show Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse have at least made you feel that there is going to be a season after all, and that somewhere in the world there are men who remember how to write laughs and how to center your attention on the stage in front of you. "Remains to be Seen" is the first show this season which has had any theatrical vitality, any sense of responsible men at work.

In "Remains to be Seen," however, the authors are not at their *most* responsible. Their good habits, acquired through long experience, keep the show bristling at the surface, buoyant and funny without too many outright lapses of energy. What they have not been able to do is dig deep enough into their materials to give them a solid center of logic and sympathy. The laughs come, the show moves, but the characters do not solicit your intense concern, and this is as necessary to broad farce as it is to straight drama. In "Arsenic and Old Lace" you cared, in a foolish way, about the dramatic critic and his girl; you were anxious that he should disentangle himself from the preposterous circumstances in which his lunatic aunts had embroiled him and succeed in marrying the girl. "Remains to be Seen" offers some of the same zany contrivances which marked the earlier piece, and occasionally it makes use of the same impudent point of view toward murder, suicide, and sex. But the love story is merely marked in, treated conventionally and even indifferently; it is, in effect, as much a joke as everything else in the play, and this high-handed and matter-of-fact



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treatment robs the entire narrative of its impetus. There is a lot of momentum in the staging and in the accumulation of gags, but there is no story urgency beneath these things, and the evening leaves you with the feeling that you have been amused, all right, but that you have also been slightly swindled.

Structurally, the piece is a kind of potpourri of devices rather than a straightforward comic idea. Many of the devices are very funny: a girl who is about to be shot is much more concerned about answering a ringing telephone; a policeman's life is saved because he has concealed a pornographic book next to his heart. But the devices are strung together rather than imbedded in a coherent plot. A murder mystery and a romance between a girl who sings with a band and a boy who wants to be a drummer have simply been thrown at each other; they never do fit. Messrs. Lindsay and Crouse have presumably tried to satisfy the yearnings of mystery-lovers and the devotees of tomcat sex in one jocular swoop, but neither of these groups is likely to feel that it has been done well by, and the sex matter is handled so blatantly, with so little ironic comment, that it would seem to have come from the hands of much less sophisticated, and far more vulgar, entrepreneurs.

The performances are, on the whole, fine. Jackie Cooper wins you over after a hesitant start, and is remarkably funny whenever he is called upon to simulate a passion for hot rhythms. Janis Paige is overly strident as the girl, though she seems so expert in doing whatever she is called upon to do that one feels the direction to be responsible for her excesses. Howard Lindsay, in a secondary role which he took over during rehearsals, is as accomplished as always, though he is, as a performer, too big for the part and there is inevitable disappointment in the disproportion. Bretaigne Windust's stage direction is unusually stiff in the earlier portions of the play, and he is probably responsible for the sabotage of what should have been an amusing scene: the police and medical men called in to take care of the corpse are distracted from their immediate errands by a fight which is being televised in the next room. In the latter portions of the play, Windust's over-emphatic manner pays off, however, and he keeps the third act going at the necessary farce clip.

"Remains to be Seen" has so much that is funny in it that it should have been better. Some wonderful ideas have been frittered away on a carelessly hacked-out narrative. (*At the Morosco*)

## SAINT JOAN

THE Theatre Guild, Margaret Webster, and Uta Hagen have joined forces in a new production of what was probably Shaw's most ambitious play, and all three have turned in curiously disappointing jobs. The production is by no means a thorough botch, but it is, in every department, without that special inspiration or fresh attack which is necessary to justify and distinguish such a revival.

The Guild, to get the least of it over with, has provided a simplified mounting for the play which errs not in its simplicity but in its gloominess. There is no reason for Richard Harrison Senie's settings to be more elaborate, but there is every reason for investing them with greater richness in color and inventiveness in line. As it is, except for some handsome banners which serve as a front curtain, they have a routine and catch-as-catch-can air about them which suggests, at the outset, a rather tired approach.

Miss Webster is at fault in a different way. A director who has almost single-handedly restored Shakespeare to the popular stage, she has here made the mistake of playing Shaw as though he were Shakespeare. In the very first scene the actors begin to move heroically and to speak heroically, as though they were dealing with a non-realistic theatre and the language of verse. "Saint Joan" is easily the loftiest of Shaw's pieces, but it is not a verse play. It is a prose piece of wit, intellect, and wry common-sense—Shaw being Shaw on an unShavian subject—and the tendency to play it with the vocal stops out causes it to overshoot its mark seriously. The best performances are given by those members of the cast who have been able to resist this general pattern: John Buckmaster as the Dauphin, Andrew Cruickshank as the Earl of Warwick, Frederic Rolf as the Inquisitor, and Frederic Worlock as the Archbishop of Rheims. These gentlemen pay rather more attention to the precise content of the lines, the subtle and sometimes very legalistic word-play, and they succeed in making you listen to it; the others, including Miss Hagen, drift off into a rhetorical speaking style and an overemphatic posture which is meant to be impressive but which is actually pretty hollow.

Miss Hagen is one of the best of our younger actresses, and it is genuinely disappointing to find her so ordinary in this performance. She does make something of the trial scene in the third act, but here she is only doing the kind of overwrought and agonized playing at which she has been so successful before. What she has not got hold of is the earlier Joan, the improbable country girl who must badger worldly men into belief, or even the successful Joan, who must slowly discover that God-given triumphs do not necessarily beget gratitude, or increased belief, in the triumphant. I think that Miss Hagen has sanctified her saint too early. She plays her from the beginning with a kind of lyrical hindsight, makes her always a happily confident instrument of powers which are not going to fail her. Joan may have been like this—though few saints are so free of self-doubt, so without anxiety and pain over the possible failure of their missions— but an actress faced with the problem of holding an audience's attention for three hours might well have been shrewder: to play a part as though unaware that there is any real struggle involved is to play it without tension, and to risk the loss of the audience's concern. For two long acts we *are* unconcerned for Miss Hagen, and the delay is fatal. (*At the Cort*)

WALTER KERR.



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# The Screen

## ALL THE TALENT MONEY CAN BUY

ONCE a young American was in Paris on a September Sunday afternoon. He and a friend decided to have tea. They took a taxi across the Place de la Concorde, down the Rue Castiglioni to the Hotel Continental. There, they ordered coffee and pastry which was served in a shadowed, elegant room facing on the courtyard. Their only companions that rainy afternoon were elderly and British.

Little did they suspect the truth about the Continental. They knew not that Nina Foch, a rich, Technicolored, American divorcée, interested in art, had a suite in that very hotel. That Gene Kelly, an ex-GI art student who danced was being subtly pursued by Miss Foch who pretended to admire his paintings when in reality she was interested only in him.

Kelly, for all those young Americans knew, was in the hotel that very afternoon, struggling with himself over his dilemma: whether it was to be poverty, art, the love of a cute French ballerina named Leslie Caron (who, incidentally, was then engaged to the successful music-hall baritone, Georges Guetary), and last, but most important of all, the respect of that other ex-GI in Paris, the obscure pianist and cigarette-smoker, Oscar Levant. Or whether he would continue to accept the friendship and francs of Miss Foch.

The story continues: Kelly lopes around Paris for a while, shows his paintings in the Montmartre, extemporizes fine dances while Oscar Levant plays George Gershwin's music, entertains all the charming children, lovely old ladies, quaint shop-keepers, and handsome *flics* of the Left Bank with his singing and dancing.

After a while the problems straighten out. Gene and Leslie abandon Nina and Georges (a really nice guy, who understands) and go off to be married and happy.

This interesting story has been made into a movie. It is directed by Vincente Minnelli and is called *"An American in Paris."*

The young American (in Paris, but not to be confused with Kelly) mentioned earlier, saw this movie recently and was very pleased with it, partically because it had Technicolor photography of places like the Continental which he knew and which therefore caused him pleasant recollections of tourist days, but also because he enjoys dancing, color, etc. The film has all the admirable things an MGM musical usually has, and is free of many of the breed's disadvantages (Vic Damone, Jose Iturbi, *et al.*).

First of all, it is pretty. It has color, imagination, blue haze-framed dance scenes, all the bright reds and yellows, all the pretty girls, all the faked shots of the Left Bank replete with gentlemen in beards and berets, with posters and flower sellers. It is amusingly written. It has Kelly's fine dancing (he is best of all in the simple ones—when he undertakes an "American In Paris Ballet" composed for the cinematic occasion, his own brilliance is lost in a mish-mash of Radio City Music Hall ballerinas and clever, unsuccessful backgrounds in the styles of Dufy, Toulouse-Lautrec, and, grotesquely, Henri Rousseau).

The picture is well-paced. Levant, Kelly, and Georges Guetary are all extraordinarily talented entertainers. Their talent is taken advantage of. The transitions are fast. The yak-yak is dispensed with as much as possible.

It is a disappointing film too. The publicity had led this reviewer to expect something unusual, since Kelly's "On the Town" had been a real departure from the opulent Metro tradition. But this is substantially the same old stuff. It used to be set in Mexico and used to star Xavier Cugat and a chihuahua.

So this is Paris. MGM on the Seine. Where Ma Perkins sells gardenias outside Notre Dame while chatting nimbly about the *plume* that is *sur* the *table*. This is Paris, the cultural center of a beautiful land which has Oz as its capital, Frank Morgan as its king, Esther Williams as its queen, Janie Powell as its princess-apparent. Where the trees are always green; where laughing crowds grow on song-cues.

It is not the Paris of life and of light, of gray, vaulted skies, rain, and unkempt age. It is not the Paris of passion, but of prettiness. It's a nice place to visit, but I'd never want to live there.

WILLIAM PFAFF.

# Of Note

IN THE October issue of *Today* (638 Deming Place, Chicago 14, Ill.) John J. O'Connor discusses opportunities for Catholic schools.

> It is a matter of common knowledge that young Mormons are expected to devote one or two years to missionary endeavor—at their own expense. Some young Quakers spend their summers in Europe helping farmers in war-stricken areas. Those who remain at home inaugurate a clean-up-paint-up program, also at their own expense, in slum areas.
>
> Practically nothing in the way of apostolic work is either asked or demanded of our young people except that they sponsor occasional dances or bingo parties for home and foreign missions. Nothing is demanded of the laity except that they keep quiet, mind their own business, and drop a contribution into the collection basket every Sunday. . . .
>
> A start might be made in our Catholic hospitals. The Little Sisters of the Poor have never been known to spurn volunteer help. Practically every Catholic social agency and institution in the United States would welcome a few helping hands.



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# *Mr. Kennan Reviews Our Foreign Policy*

By HAROLD C. HINTON

IN JULY 1947 there appeared in *Foreign Affairs* an anonymous article, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," which analyzed in realistic tones the nature of the Soviet state and Soviet policy, and prescribed, as a countermeasure, a policy of "firm containment, designed to confront the Russians with unalterable counterforce at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world," with the hope of bringing about eventually "either the break-up or the gradual mellowing of Soviet power." The author, "Mr. X," was said to be George F. Kennan, a State Department official who was sometimes referred to as America's diplomatic Chief of Staff, and this identification was never denied.

It has now been admitted by the inclusion of "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" as an appendix to Mr. Kennan's first book, *American Diplomacy* 1900-1950 (University of Chicago Press. $2.75). The bulk of this extremely interesting and well written book consists of six lectures delivered by Mr. Kennan, who has been on leave from the State Department since 1950, at the University of Chicago. The lectures analyze six main episodes in the history of American foreign policy since 1898, when the United States became a world power.

The first is the war with Spain and our acquisition of Puerto Rico, the Hawaiian Islands, Guam, and the Philippines. This whole process, Mr. Kennan finds, was carried through by a small group of persons in the government, with the aid of an inflamed public opinion and for questionable motives. The acquisition of colonies which had little prospect of becoming states, he believes, was an injustice to the peoples concerned and a violation of the spirit of our Constitution. The present condition of the territories which we acquired in 1898 seems to bear out his argument, but the strategic importance of those areas to the United States, except perhaps for the Philippines, is obvious. Those were the days of what has been called the Diplomacy of Imperialism. If the United States had not taken those islands, they would probably have fallen to some other power or powers. Colonialism is a feature, although an ugly one which happily seems to be disappearing, of modern history, and it is difficult to imagine the United States as the only world power without dependencies.

With regard to the second episode, the Open Door in China, Mr. Kennan points out several features which are well known—the absurdity of maintaining, as Secretary of State Hay did, the principle of equality of commercial opportunity in China while at the same time recognizing the existence of spheres of influence carved out by the other powers; the ineffectiveness of the Open Door notes; and the hold which the doctrine, or at least the name, has acquired over the imagination of the American public. He also proves a less widely understood fact, namely that the Open Door notes were directed at least as much against Great Britain, which had begun to depart from the principle of equality of opportunity and set up its own sphere of influence, as against any other power.

Mr. Kennan then examines the nature of American Far Eastern policy before the Second World War and finds that "our relation to the peoples of the Far East has been colored by a certain sentimentality toward the Chinese." He seems to regret that it became necessary for us to crush Japan and thereby eliminate a powerful barrier against the spread of Communism. This is an attitude which appears to be becoming more and more widespread among men whose main present concern is the threat of Soviet power and Communist ideology. Mr. Kennan seems to forget that if we had permitted Japan to build an East Asian empire at the expense of China, of Southeast Asia, and perhaps of the Soviet Union, our present position in the Far East might well be weaker and more uncomfortable than it actually is. The Japanese in their day were as brutal as any conquerors in history, and no useful purpose is served by overlooking that fact merely because they are no longer our enemies.

★

COMING to the two World Wars, Mr. Kennan expresses his regret at the elimination of Germany as an active factor in European power politics and as a bulwark against Russia. His expressions of esteem for the Kaiser's Germany seem highly inappropriate in a book by a professed admirer of democracy. He deplores the terrible loss of life in the First War, the damage inflicted on the fabric of Western civilization, and the failure of the United States to use its influence from the beginning to bring about "the earliest possible termination of a war that nobody could really win."

In the light of his penetrating summary of the hard facts governing the international politics of the last decade, Mr. Kennan's conclusion that the importance of the concessions made to Stalin at Teheran, Yalta, and Potsdam "has recently been considerably overrated" hardly seems debatable. He also scores a clean hit against the critics of these concessions when he notes that had they not been made, "it is my guess that we would still be hearing reproachful voices saying: 'You claim that cooperation with Russia is not possible. How do you know? You never even tried.'"

In his final lecture Mr. Kennan considers the nature of American foreign policy as a whole, in the past and at the present time. He concludes that "there has been in the past a very significant gap between challenge and response in our conduct of foreign policy; that this gap still exists; and that, whereas fifty years ago it was not

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HAROLD C. HINTON is a member of Georgetown University's History Department.



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very dangerous to us, today it puts us in grave peril." He complains that our foreign policy has not been characterized by "privacy, deliberateness, or the long-term approach." We have been excessively devoted, he feels, to idealism and to international law. In formulating our war aims, we have tended to forget that "a war fought in the name of high moral principle finds no early end short of some form of total domination." In short, our foreign policy has been that of a democracy, and Mr. Kennan is afraid that its defects may prove ruinous. As a corrective he recommends that we have

> the modesty to admit that our own national interest is all that we are really capable of knowing and understanding—and the courage to recognize that if our own purposes and undertakings here at home are decent ones, unsullied by arrogance or hostility towards other people or delusions of superiority, then the pursuit of our national interest can never fail to be conducive to a better world.

This might be an adequate, though hardly inspiring, prescription for a calmer age, but it can hardly serve as a standard around which the United States can expect the free world to rally against Communism and build a just and stable social order. Nor does the second appendix to the book, which contains another article from *Foreign Affairs*, offer any definite answer to this problem. The theme of "America and the Russian Future" is that if Stalin's regime were to collapse and a new one emerge, we should have no reason or right to expect it to be a capitalist democracy like our own. Mr. Kennan believes that such a collapse may occur even without a major war, if once the Russian people should decide to assert themselves and if they should learn "the news that America had shed the shackles of disunity, confusion and doubt, had taken a new lease of hope and determination, and was setting about her tasks with enthusiasm and clarity of purpose." Unfortunately, recent history offers little support for any hope that a totalitarian regime can be overthrown otherwise than by defeat in a foreign war.

Mr. Kennan and the rest of us would do well not to indulge in pipedreams about the coming collapse of Communism and adopt toward the Soviet Union Abraham Lincoln's attitude toward slavery during the years before the Civil War. To crush the source of the evil would require a major war, a cure which might well be worse than the disease. We must, however, struggle to prevent the disease from spreading to areas not yet contaminated. My own conviction is that the most effective weapon which our government could employ in this struggle would be an expansion of the Point Four program. With relatively modest sums of money, teams of technicians can do wonders in improving the material well-being of the "underdeveloped areas." Beyond that governments can scarcely go. The spiritual regeneration of the world is not the task of bureaucracies but of religion.


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These questions, which have been mooted among philosophers and theologians for many centuries, are discussed and critically examined in this work by Father Davitt. The author first presents the views of six eminent authorities who favor the opinion that the will is superior to the intellect, beginning with Henry of Ghent and ending with Suarez. Then in six chapters he presents the contentions of those on the side of the intellect as being superior. This group opens with Albert the Great and closes with Bellarmine. These divergent opinions about the role of the will and intellect in the theory of law lead to far-reaching and opposite conclusions.

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# Books

*Dizzy: The Life and Personality of Benjamin Disraeli. Hesketh Pearson. Harper.* $4.00.

DISRAELI once wrote a biography of a parliamentary colleague, and this circumstance gives Hesketh Pearson an opportunity to expound his own theories of the biographer's craft. "To those who are interested in human beings, the story of humanity is tedious and depressing, because repetitive. . . . The only thing that brings old movements, far-off politics and battles long ago to life is the participation in them of a remarkable personality. . . . [Disraeli] should have summarized the exploits and concentrated on the hero." Disraeli did not follow this injunction; he was far too interested in the politics and the battles. But Mr. Pearson is duly engrossed in the personality of his hero. Confronted with the wit, the eccentricities, and the genius of the remarkable Victorian, he would obviously have found his biographical labors just as congenial if Disraeli had never heard of the Corn Laws or of Constantinople. His attitude is: "Meanwhile the dreary empty game of politics went on. We must select only those moments which disclose the peculiar nature of our protagonist."

In this he succeeds admirably. In burnished prose, he presents the young Disraeli, dressed in extravagantly colored waistcoats and trousers, with jewelled rings over his gloves, his hair hanging in well-oiled ringlets to his shoulders. His conversation, scintillating and studded with epigrams, endeared him to society hostesses long before the electorate was impressed with either his program or his oratory. But he was a man who knew from youth that he was destined for great things. Defeated four times before he was elected to Parliament, he told Lord Melbourne three years before his first success at the polls that he intended to be Prime Minister. Lord Melbourne did not live to see the day, but Mary Anne, the flighty widow he had married at least partly for her money, gave a grand reception and sailed forth on the arm of the Prince of Wales. His wife was twelve years his senior and frequently silly, but although he acknowledged that she never could remember which came first, the Greeks or the Romans, their life together was devotedly happy.

But he was not content with domestic tranquillity or an arduous political career that made him Her Majesty's first and most fondly regarded minister. He aspired to be a great poet and novelist. To the staid middle class society of the day it seemed astonishing, and somewhat improper, for a distinguished politician to write romantic novels. To Mr. Pearson it appears delightful, and he subjects these novels to a scrutiny usually reserved for the classics of English prose. Not that he is under any illusion about their literary value. He can be as cutting about the run-away romanticism and static characterization as any contemporary critic. He tells of Disraeli's desire to dedicate the first volume of a long narrative poem to the Duke of Wellington, "but the man who had faced Napoleon's bombardment without blenching quailed at the prospect of reading Disraeli's pentameters, and politely refused his permission." Nevertheless he finds these exuberant outpourings exceedingly revealing of Disraeli's hopes and dreams. Not far beneath the surface the author himself is always visible, often involved in readily identifiable incidents. If the novels have any literary merit of their own, it lies in their pungent epigrams. Mr. Pearson, no novice at the neat turning of a phrase, quotes scores of Disraeli aphorisms with the relish of a fellow craftsman.

In fact, Mr. Pearson's attitude toward his subject is so unreservedly admiring that one suspects his only regret is that he was born too late to shout his "Hear, hear" in person. He vilifies Disraeli's political opponents with a partisan vitriol probably unmatched since the campaign of 1880. Every policy Disraeli championed, every speech he made in his perfectly articulated but expressionless style, is viewed as an act of supreme acumen. And apparently it would be footless to challenge any of these political judgments of Mr. Pearson's. His support of Disraeli's version of Tory Democracy is convincing; he has as little sympathy for middle-class liberalism as Disraeli had. But it is only an embellishment to the work at hand—the description of a personality.

Mr. Pearson has written biographies of other men of wit and talent, among them Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, Gilbert and Sullivan, Charles Dickens. In Disraeli he has found a major political figure with equally congenial attributes. If he skimps on the political background and tends to view nineteenth century English politics too exclusively as a duel between his hero and the blackguard Gladstone, he nevertheless comes up with a charming and sympathetic portrait of an unusual human being. Disraeli would have enjoyed this book.

CAROL H. WEISS.

*The Poetry of Ezra Pound. Hugh Kenner. New Directions.* $4.00.

IT is always a serious matter for one's vanity to read an author whom one does not understand. The tendency is to regard what is obscure as imperturbably profound or as hopelessly pretentious. But since most readers suspect that the truth probably lies somewhere between the two guesses, the question of judgment becomes irritating. It is not an unsolvable problem, of course, for one can always, when pressed, find a cryptic statement or two. Yet there are few people who have not at one time or another said, "What does Ezra Pound mean?"

That is what Hugh Kenner tries to explain in *The Poetry of Ezra Pound,* and, praise be to Mr. Kenner, he does it well. He gives a very



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thorough explanation of the ideogram, the key to Pound's art. He explains the poetry which precedes the Pisan Cantos. He gives a number of excellent examples of interpretations of Pound's early and late poetry. And, like most critics who teach and have been goaded beyond their powers by the refined excesses of the bulk of academic criticism, he becomes often pedantically anti-pedantic.

The test of all introductory works is a re-reading of the original text, and by this standard Mr. Kenner fares quite well. The Pisan Cantos are made clearer in some respects and, although they do not become crystal clear by any means, some readers will feel encouraged to go on after reading Mr. Kenner's work. At the present time, the common reaction of a newcomer to Pound's poetry is that of consternation. Mr. Kenner does much to take away the initial fright.

The book contains numerous quotations from Ezra Pound's works and gives some excellent examples of the gusto and vitality of Pound's dealing with ideas. It is good to read such passages. As a political thinker, Pound is of questionable value but as an unpedantic, unpretentious artist with a naturally cosmopolitan outlook, he can be superb.

Ezra Pound was born in Idaho.

SERGE HUGHES.

*Lie Down in Darkness. William Styron. Bobbs-Merrill. $3.50.*

I'VE sinned only in order to lie down in darkness and find, somewhere in the net of dreams, a new father, a new home."

Leaving home, although a minor tragedy for all, is the particular sport of youth. For one reason or another young men and women break with their families and set out on their own. Like the prodigal son they seek the fashions of the world; like Beowulf they may wish to bring glory to themselves and peace to the Danes; like the rebels of Butler and Wells they demand freedom from provincial parents; like Oedipus they may be forced to flee because of their sins; or like Peyton Loftis, heroine of 26-year-old William Styron's first novel, who cannot be understood for what she is by a mother who despises her and a father who loves her to death, they take flight because they cannot get along with their parents.

Searching for a new home is often a hazard, especially when the risks are great. Some hack their way through the jungle, others drift on open seas seeking a place to lie down; all searching for answers, loves, victories. Usually they seek what they have lost—their youth, that moment which is an image of purity in their memory. Often, like Peyton, what they have lost they lost through sin, and so seek redemption.

Modern prodigal sons who grope for salvation often are clay for neither tragedy or comedy. In classical tragedy failure is assured: Oedipus must walk the face of the earth forever. To find comedy one must turn to Augustine, Dostoyevski, Bloy and the parable. But modern odysseys such as the travels of Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus as told by James Joyce are somewhere between comedy and tragedy, in the tortured middle. Many contemporary writers have a vision only for tragedy, yet like Styron know somehow of the Divine Comedy.

Peyton's search, like Stephen Dedalus', with whom she has much in common, is an abortive tragedy. Peyton never finds the father she


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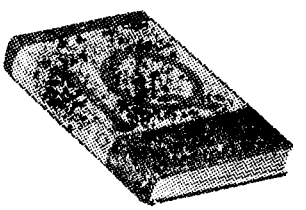

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seeks, never the redeeming Grace. She prays for forgiveness and then takes her life; she falls like a rock and thinks of the sparrows. Her failure, unlike the failure of Oedipus, lacks the calm acceptance of fact. Styron, who apparently had the youth that Sophocles missed, cannot give in. But Peyton must drown in her world without Grace: "I feel adrift, as if I were drowning out in dark space somewhere without anything to pull me back to earth again." In this tortured story the drowning is all too real. Peyton wants to, but cannot see as the medieval Franciscan saw; and William Styron cannot write as Raymond Lull wrote: "I drown in an ocean, but the ocean is love."

ALFRED O'BRIEN, JR.

*Innocent III, Church Defender. Charles Edward Smith. Louisiana State University Press.* $3.50.

POPE INNOCENT III is one of the most attractive figures of medieval history. In his exalted conception of the Church and the pontiff's responsibilities, we find the realization of a trend of thought begun three centuries before his time in the Cluniac reform.

The Pope was greatly concerned about the first great heresy of the Occident, the movement of the Albigensians, and he enforced its destruction, being convinced that only an unimpeachable Church would be able to retain the allegiance of the laity.

This new book written by the head of the history department at Louisiana State University is not a full-length biography, but a study of some neglected features of the Pope's pontificate. It deals especially with Innocent's efforts to fight simony and absenteeism and for the enforcement of clerical celibacy and monastic reforms. Although the book is only partly based on recent material—most of it is based on the Pope's letters, published in the *Patrologia Latina* more than six decades ago—the author does bring many interesing questions to the fore.

In the second part of his book Smith deals with the Pope's relations with Hungary, Bulgaria and Poland and his pathetic efforts to revive the crusading spirit. This chapter has a real touch of tragedy, an idealism for an enterprise that seemed to his contemporaries to be completely outdated and doomed to failure.

Again and again the powerful Pontiff reprimanded the faithful for their indifference to the plight of the Holy Land. He was especially disappointed to think that Venice seemed to have only commercial interests in the East, instead of religious zeal. Desperately he wrote to the Doge: "it would be absurd if the power Venice has shown in temporal things should be wanting in the business of Christ." He dreamed of a great crusade, comparable to the First Crusade.

But Innocent III died on July 16, 1216 and with him went the inspiration for a new crusade. The commercial cities of Italy, whose support was paramount in the early crusades, fell to fighting among themselves for their share in the prosperous Levant commerce stimulated by the crusades.

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Both nationalism and rationalism were growing throughout Europe; no longer was there the climate for such Christian adventure.

Mr. Smith doubts whether a revival of the crusading spirit could have been achieved even under Innocent's powerful leadership, but in this opinion he takes a step that I would not be inclined to follow.

MAX FISCHER.

*Mister Johnson. Joyce Cary. Harper. $3.*

SOMEONE at Harper deserves a bonus for putting the preface of *Mister Johnson* at the end of the book. Written for a new English edition of the work (which was originally published in 1939), the preface contains Cary's "explanation" of the technical and artistic bases of his style and characters. To read it before the story would be almost like taking a short course in the chemistry of wood before going out to enjoy the glories of the autumn leaves. If it's needed at all, it should follow the experience.

For the book is, as the author wants it to be, a single, continuous experience for the reader, and a rich and vivid one. Written in the present tense Cary used so effectively in *A Fearful Joy* and other novels, it gives a memorable picture of the brief but spectacular career of what is undoubtedly one of His Majesty's most exuberant civil servants, real or fictional. Johnson is a native youth of West Africa, an enthusiastic, loyal and quite inefficient clerk in a colonial office, who takes a wild joy in the simple fact of existence. He careens through life, a pulsating symbol of the individual's will to liberty, resisting rules and conventions, both English and African. When Johnson stands up to the world in preference to being stood up by it, it is with guileless gaiety rather than sullen defiance, the reaction of a man who instinctively knows the tentativeness of the law and puts it in proper perspective to the person.

Cary is successful in making this irrepressible child of the bush an altogether human and consistent personality. Considering the material with which he works, it is a real achievement to put his hero down the middle between the noble savage of the sentimentalists and the servile clown of the Kipling school, with only an occasional slip in either direction. His deft use of the present tense is a big help in the accomplishment, even though he has to chop it off somewhat too neatly, in contrast to the technique of letting it exhaust itself, as in the later *A Fearful Joy*.

This breathless whirl through jungle society and the outposts of an empire give Cary a chance to display most of the gifts that make him one of our most vigorous and creative novelists. His robust wit and perceptive irony never prevent a compassionate handling of themes that would produce more heat than light in less sophisticated hands—the suffocating hand of bureaucracy, the problems "progress" brings to both conqueror and conquered, the poignancy of the lack of communication between the white man and the black man.

PAUL V. FARRELL.


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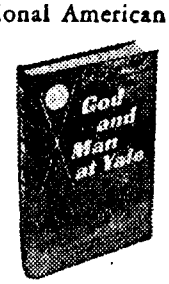
Buckley's career at Yale (class of '50) was brilliant and stormy. The class historian described him: "The most outspoken *News* chairman in 70 years, William F. Buckley, Jr., neatly undercut tolerance, tomfoolery, and everything to the left of Senator Taft . . . we had none to match him." His first book amounts to a declaration of war against the present drift of American education. Using his own alma mater, Yale, as a case in point, he shows how "academic freedom" is being used to undermine traditional American values. Buckley is an eloquent spokesman for the new generation of conservatives—the" new radicals" on the university scene. **$3.50**

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*Life in America* (2 *vols.*). *Marshall B. Davidson. Houghton Mifflin.* $20.

IT WAS a happy notion conceived five years ago by the publishers to produce this sumptuous book in collaboration with the Metropolitan Museum. Marshall B. Davidson was granted a leave of absence from his duties as associate curator of the American Wing of the Museum to make a graphic survey of American history, which is what this book is. It is in the main a picture designed to make history alive to the average reader. In every instance, paintings, prints, drawings, graphs and photographs done contemporaneously were given preference over those done in after-time. These include maps, buildings, street scenes, battle scenes, costumes, stirring happenings of historic import, games, ways of life, posters, examples of printing, factories, the effects of new inventions on existence, business developments, examples of handicraft, farming occupations, cowboys, fairs, scenes of the Gold Rush, American seafaring life, plantation life in the South, ways of locomotion—the catalogue of things included is nearly endless.

The pageant of American life begins from the beginning—with the exploration of the continent by the Norsemen and the later discovery by Columbus. In this connection, there are beautiful reproductions of the graceful, picturesque sailships of the periods. The participation of several nations is covered in separate chapters. The trek westward, with its conflicts with Indian tribes and the gradual extinction of the buffalo, engages a considerable portion of the helpful text. Indian games, too, are pictured; and we have representations of early firearms used. What America means to the immigrant from king-ridden Europe is adequately revealed in a chapter entitled "The New American." The pictures in this instance are truly eloquent. They well illustrate the motto for the first volume from Horace Walpole: "Liberty has still a continent to live in." JOHN COURNOS.

## • REVIEWERS •

CAROL H. WEISS completed graduate studies in Political Science at Columbia and is now an executive in the New York headquarters of the Girl Scouts of America.

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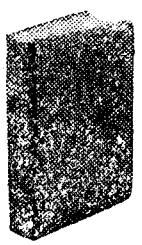

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